

INFORMATION REPORT

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- In October 1936, SUMITOMO (住友), a Japanese industrialist, began work on the construction of a refinery at Mump'young (127-22, 39-14). Construction of one copper furnace and two lead furnaces was completed in November 1937 and the refinery began operation in January 1938. The purpose of the refinery was to produce copper, lead, gold, and silver by processing mineral ores from mines at Kwon (127-14, 39-26), Yongjung (127-50, 40-10), Tanchon (128-54, 40-28), and Sonchon (124-54, 39-48), which were all under the management of SUMITOMO. In October 1941, the lead-bullion electrolysis factory was established. Lead produced at the factory was sent to Hungnam and Yawata (130-48, 33-52) in Japan, while gold and silver bullion was sent to Japan for further refining. Before World War II, the Mump'young refinery was one of the three largest in Korea.
- After the outbreak of the war, gold production was limited by the government, and copper production was curtailed because of a lack of raw materials. The refinery mainly produced lead during the war. The refinery was closed down after the Japanese surrender until 13 October 1945, when it opened as the National Mump'young Refinery of the North Korean government. It did not suffer a loss of equipment during the liberation.
- The factory management began to experiment with the production of lead arsenate, which is used in farming, using by-products of lead bullion, arsenate acid, and electrolytic lead. The results of the experiment were successful, and the refinery began to produce lead arsenate in February 1946. To meet the Korean demand of an annual output of 500 tons a year, a new lead arsenate factory was built by 13 October 1946, when it went into full production.
- In April 1947, new silver electrolysis equipment was installed in the refinery so that gold and silver could be completely refined at the plant without having to be shipped to Japan. From March 1948 on, as a result of further experimentation, the refinery was able to produce bismuth bullion from litharge while producing gold and silver.

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5. The North Korean government had to accelerate the program of the factory to meet the demand for goods being shipped to the Soviet Union. A 100-ton blast furnace, which was idle in the Chinnamp'o Refinery, was moved to the Mump'yon Refinery in November 1949 and put into use in December. Thirty-six new electrolytic cells were also built to aid in increasing production.
6. The lead arsenate factory was suspended in January 1950 as a result of difficulties in disposing of the products. Difficulties were experienced in producing bismuth by electrolysis, and so the factory converted to a dry-refining method. In March 1950, with the installation of a 250-kilowatt generator, 36 new electrolytic cells were installed, followed by 77 more in June, bringing the total to 288.
7. With the additional equipment, the bismuth output reached 1,000 tons monthly, and the North Korean authorities planned to add another 288 cells. However, with the North Korean invasion of South Korea, the new project was not realized, and production declined because of difficulties in transportation and exploitation of mineral ores. By October 1950, 50 cells were in operation.
8. On 1 September, three bombs fell around the blast furnace room, destroying the building and a part of the furnace and killing seven men and injuring nine. On 21 September, the refinery stopped production and all machinery was moved from one to three kilometers from the original site. All the factory workers were discharged and the staff members fled.
9. When the area was occupied by United Nations troops on 13 October 1950, a Factory Self-Defense Unit was organized in the zinc factory. Over 250 laborers, technicians and office workers applied to join the unit. On 25 October, the Refinery Special Headquarters of the Tachan Youth Corps was organized in the factory to carry on restoration work. By 31 October, the oxygen factory and silver electrolytic equipment were restored and on 15 November the lead electrolytic equipment had all been moved back into the original plant by the self-defense unit, which renamed itself Mump'yon Factory Self-Defense Unit.
10. Since two of the three largest refineries in North Korea, at Hungnam and Chinnamp'o, were destroyed in the Korean War, the Mump'yon Refinery remained as the only factory of any importance which could possibly function.

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ment. For a previous report on the Mump'yon Refinery, see

Encls: 1 inventory of property of Mump'yon Refinery
 1 collection of charts
 1 list of equipment

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